

IOWA ARTIST
Inpanh Thavonekham

TITLE **Celebrate Culture**

GRADE LEVEL
Elementary | Middle | High School

These lesson plans are designed for art educators to adapt to the needs of their individual classes.

INFLUENCE
Laotian Culture

MATERIALS
Variety of art materials:
Markers
Pencils
Crayons
Paper
Cloth



Iowa artist Inpanh Thavonekham

LESSON PLAN: ELEMENTARY | MIDDLE | HIGH SCHOOL Inpanh Thavonekham

OVERVIEW

Iowa folk artist Inpanh Thavonekham immigrated to the United States from Vientiane, Laos, and brought with him the traditions and influence of the Laotian people. Mr. Thavonekham's first love was music but his artistic interests and talents expanded to include wood carving, painting and costume making. The artistry of Inpanh Thavonekham reflects the influence of his Laotian culture. In the study of this Iowa folk artist, students will create a piece of art reflective of their own culture or a culture of their choice.

Preview Inpanh Thavonekham's **Biography, Video Synopsis, Video** and the **Images** of his work on the Iowa Arts Council web site www.iowaartscouncil.org/ and select resources appropriate for your adaptation of this lesson. Have students locate the artist's place of residence on an Iowa map and place of birth on a world map.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What inspires and influences Iowa artist Inpanh Thavonekham?
- How does Iowa artist Inpanh Thavonekham inspire you?
- What else inspires and influences you and your artwork?

INTRODUCTION

Inpanh Thavonekham creates art that reflects his Laotian culture. People often create art characteristic of their own culture. Students will think of art characteristic of their own culture or a culture of interest to them. They will create a piece of art that communicates their culture or heritage so that someone who did not know them would be able to identify the culture from the work of art.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- recognize the relationship of art and culture
- research, plan and create a piece that communicates their cultural background or a culture of their choice
- connect the internal artist to the works of Inpanh Thavonekham

PROCEDURES

1. Show students the video of Mr. Thavonekham. Ask students to watch for the cultural influences in the artwork of this folk artist.
2. Discuss the students' reflections and connections to Inpanh Thavonekham's art and the art forms he uses. Highlight the images provided of the artist's musical instruments and discuss how his culture has influenced his work.
3. The teacher will share his/her own culture or a selected culture and how the art and traditions of this culture influences his/her life. Ask students to identify their cultural background and discuss their cultural traditions. Brainstorm what students already know about the artwork of different cultures. Identify the questions students have about various cultures and traditions. Provide students a variety of resources including library, internet and discussions with their families and friends to gather information and answer their own questions about cultural celebrations and traditions.

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IOWA'S
CULTURAL
+
ARTISTIC
LEGACY
EVOLVES

Influence + Inspiration

LESSON PLAN: ELEMENTARY | MIDDLE | HIGH SCHOOL
Inpanh Thavonekham



4. Using this information the students will create a piece of art communicating their heritage or culture to others. Students will choose, research, plan and create the piece.
5. The lesson will culminate with students sharing their artwork and inviting discussion and evaluation of the piece, how it communicates the culture or heritage and how the piece inspires or influences others.

RESOURCES

Internet

www.uni.edu/iowaonline/folklife_v2/lao.htm

Information about Laos/Laotian traditions, and recording of Inpanh talking about and playing instruments

www.kidsculturecenter.com/

Information about customs, traditions, celebrations and holidays from around the world

www.kennedy-center.org/programs/millennium/artist_detail.cfm?artist_id=THAVONEKHA

Inpanh Thavonekham performs music from Laos

www.loc.gov/folklife/events/HomegrownArchives/2006ConcertPDFandVideo/LaoDanceFlyer.pdf

Flyer from a Laos celebration in Iowa

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laos

Provides students background information and location in Laos

Literature

Aboriginal Art of Australia: Exploring Cultural Traditions

(*Art Around the World*) by Carol Finley

The Art of African Masks: Exploring Cultural Traditions (Art Around the World)

by Carol Finley

Everyday Life Through Chinese Peasant Art

by Tricia Morrissey and Ding Sang Mak

Traditional African American Arts and Activities

by Sonya Kimble-Ellis

The Kids' Multicultural Art Book: Art & Craft Experiences from Around the World (Williamson Kids Can! Series) by Alexandra M. Terzian

National Standards | Iowa Standards

1. Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
2. Using knowledge of structures and functions
3. Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas
4. Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
5. Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others
6. Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines